

# Preparing health services for climate change in Australia

Author(s): Blashki G, Armstrong G, Berry HL, Weaver HJ, Hanna EG, Bi P, Harley D,

Spickett JT

**Year:** 2011

Journal: Asia-Pacific Journal of Public Health / Asia-Pacific Academic Consortium for

Public Health. 23 (2 Suppl): 133S-143

#### Abstract:

Although the implications of climate change for public health continue to be elucidated, we still require much work to guide the development of a comprehensive strategy to underpin the adaptation of the health system. Adaptation will be an evolving process as impacts emerge. The authors aim is to focus on the responses of the Australian health system to health risks from climate change, and in particular how best to prepare health services for predicted health risks from heat waves, bushfires, infectious diseases, diminished air quality, and the mental health impacts of climate change. In addition, the authors aim to provide some general principles for health system adaptation to climate change that may be applicable beyond the Australian setting. They present some guiding principles for preparing health systems and also overview some specific preparatory activities in relation to personnel, infrastructure, and coordination. Increases in extreme weather-related events superimposed on health effects arising from a gradually changing climate will place additional burdens on the health system and challenge existing capacity. Key characteristics of a climate change-prepared health system are that it should be flexible, strategically allocated, and robust. Long-term planning will also require close collaboration with the nonhealth sectors as part of a nationwide adaptive response.

Source: http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1010539510395121

### **Resource Description**

#### Early Warning System: M

resource focus on systems used to warn populations of high temperatures, extreme weather, or other elements of climate change to prevent harm to health

A focus of content

Exposure: M

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Air Pollution, Extreme Weather Event, Temperature

Air Pollution: Allergens, Interaction with Temperature, Ozone, Particulate Matter

Extreme Weather Event: Drought, Flooding, Wildfires

### Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

**Temperature:** Extreme Heat, Fluctuations

Geographic Feature: M

resource focuses on specific type of geography

Rural, Urban, Other Geographical Feature

Other Geographical Feature : Alpine

Geographic Location: M

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Australasia

Health Impact: M

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Cardiovascular Effect, Infectious Disease, Injury, Mental Health/Stress, Morbidity/Mortality, Respiratory Effect

Infectious Disease: General Infectious Disease

Mental Health Effect/Stress: Other Mental Disorder

Respiratory Effect: Asthma

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern: M

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Elderly, Racial/Ethnic Subgroup

Other Racial/Ethnic Subgroup: Indigenous populations

Other Vulnerable Population: Limited mobility; People without access to cooling

Resource Type: M

format or standard characteristic of resource

Review

# Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

## Resilience: M

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

Timescale: M

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified